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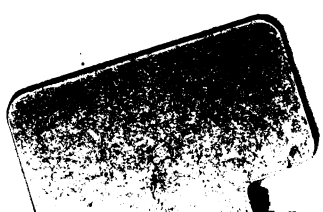

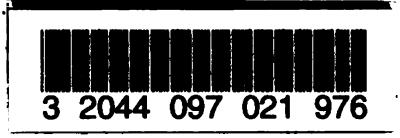
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# Proposals

FOR PUBLISHING, BY SUBSCRIPTION,

A

## *NEW SYSTEM*

OF

# GEOGRAPHY,

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

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By J. TYTLER,

COMPILER OF THE TREATISES OF ASTRONOMY AND GEOGRAPHY IN THE ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA.

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SALEM, *JUNE*, 1802.

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# *To the Public.*

To give a general knowledge of the globe we inhabit, and faithfully to deſcribe it, in its former and preſent ſtate, is the profeſſed deſign of all geographical ſyſtems. To do this with perfect accuracy, is impoſſible. No man hath viſited all the countries in the world; neither has any traveller been able to explore every part of thoſe to which he has had acceſs. In almoſt every caſe, therefore, we are obliged to derive our information from others; and the concurrent teſtimony of many witneſſes is neceſſary to eſtabliſh and authenticate a fact. But, while the number of voyagers and travellers increaſes, in the ſame proportion, the materials from whence a geographical ſyſtem may be compiled, it does, in almoſt equal proportion, augment the difficulty of compiling it. The various accounts given by travellers require much exerciſe of the judgment to balance and reduce them to conſiſtency; while the contradictions too frequently met with, even in the writings of the ſame perſon, often reduce us to the neceſſity of paying to mere *names* a reſpect, which perhaps is not juſtly due to them. The difficulty is not greater, with regard to the world in general, and its political diviſions, than with reſpect to its productions. The ſtudy of plants has engaged the attention of many learned men in different countries; the ſtudy of animals, many more. A third ſet have been employed in the ſtudy of minerals; while others have explored deſerts, and the wild, uninhabitable regions towards the poles. The reſult of all theſe reſearches ought to be met with in a geographical ſyſtem, the compilation of which muſt therefore be looked upon as a very arduous taſk: and voluminous works have been publiſhed, giving the geography only of a ſingle diviſion of the globe, or of a particular country; and even theſe works, after all the care that could be beſtowed upon them, cannot be ſuppoſed void of imperfections. Add to all this, the difficulty and expenſe of procuring the lateſt and moſt authentic intelligence; of opening a correſpondence with diſtant countries; the labour of reading and extracting from other books, &c. by which many of thoſe beſt qualified for ſuch an undertaking, have been deterred from engaging in it. It ought not, therefore, to be any matter

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of ſurpriſe, that amongſt the vaſt number of geographical publications, few ſhould be met with, that can boaſt of much intrinſic merit; and that even theſe ſhould be too voluminous to be peruſed by ſuch as are much engaged in the common affairs of life.

To abridge theſe voluminous works; to condenſe into a ſmall compaſs, the principal matters which they contain; and to publiſh them to the world in a few volumes, eaſily purchaſed, and eaſily read, is the intention of geographical grammars. But, now that book-making has too much become *a trade*, both on the part of the author and the bookſeller, this intention, however laudable, has in a great meaſure been defeated. Though, from the nature of things, it is impoſſible that any geographical work can be complete or perfect, by reaſon of the new diſcoveries that are daily made; yet the public had a right to expect, that the compilers of geographical ſyſtems would have availed themſelves of theſe diſcoveries, and that each ſubſequent edition would have lopped off at leaſt *ſome* of the errors of the former: but inſtead of this, we find nothing but ſervile copying of one ſyſtem from another, and exact reprinting of prior works, not only without correcting former inaccuracies, but even adding contradictory accounts, and *that* ſometimes in the ſame ſentence; ſo that the reader, inſtead of deriving any inſtruction, muſt be continually tempted to laugh at the abſurdity of the author.

Of all the publications of this kind, none has been of more eſſential diſſervice to geography, than that which has the name of W. GUTHRIE, Eſq. attached to it. The bookſellers in London, who found it their intereſt to ſupport this book, and bring every other of the kind into diſrepute, have puffed it off to ſuch a degree, that the public, in defiance of the *internal* evidence afforded by the book itſelf, have been, in a manner, *awed* into a belief of its ſuperior excellence. The immenſe ſale which has attended its numerous editions, has intimidated ſucceeding and more able writers from deviating in any great degree from its plan. And this ſervility in imitation has not been confined to Britain, but has even croſſed the Atlantic. Mr. CAREY, who has undertaken to reform W. GUTHRIE, Eſq. ſeems to have been over-awed by the reputation of his predeceſſor; and in conſequence, though he has corrected many errors, yet a great many ſtill remain, which, in an original compilation, he certainly would never have admitted. The errors pointed out by him, are indeed ſufficient to bring GUTHRIE's work into diſrepute with every one who wiſhes for authentic, or even *conſiſtent* information. But the European editors have

not been discouraged by this, or any other censure. Successive editions have been published both in *England and Scotland, since the appearance of Mr. Carey's; and whatever may have been the merit of the original performance, the later editors have arrogated to themselves a most unqualified approbation. In the preface to the London edition of 1798, we are told, that the many editions the book has gone through, and the increasing demand for it, afford "a proof of its utility and excellence." In the Montrose edition, (one year later) additions from late voyages and travels are noticed, with pompous amplification; and the public are assured, that improvements were first made in this admirable performance, in the year 1785, and have been continued (we must suppose) with unremitting labour and diligence, to 1798!

Had these assertions been in any way consistent with truth, the appearance of a new system would have required some apology. But when errors, *annually* increasing, are obtruded on the public with every edition; when those very errors, along with the most inconsistent and false statements of facts, are transcribed by the humble imitators of this grand performance; the time is undoubtedly arrived, when such books should be totally thrown aside, and a consistent and authentic system compiled from the foundation.

It may seem invidious to point out the errors of other publications; and we might justly be accused of partiality to our own performance, did not the works in question call loudly, not for *reformation*, for that is impossible; but for a complete and total *renovation*. It is impossible to suppose, that such multitudes of errors (for which, indeed, the word *error* is scarce adequate) could have arisen from any thing but an inattention and indolence, less excusable, perhaps, in the proprietors of Guthrie's Grammar, than in any others; as public patronage, and access to numerous late publications, had put into their hands a collection of materials, of which others are not possessed, and of which they have either made no use, or used in such a manner, as to add absurdity to former error, and contradiction to former misrepresentation. To point out all these, would require a volume; but some of the most obvious must be taken notice of, as proofs of what we have now advanced.

To begin then with the general description and dimensions of the earth. In the edition of Guthrie, printed in 1782, (the oldest to which we at present have access) the author in-

* It is very singular, that the London edition of 1798 is the *seventeenth*, while the Montrose edition, published a year later, is only the *fifteenth*.

forms us, that the calculations are made by allowing 60 miles to a degree. This number of miles is repeated in almoſt every other geographical grammar commonly to be met with. According to this proportion, the ſurface of the globe was ſaid to contain upwards of 199 millions, or, in round numbers, 200 millions of ſquare miles. The ſame calculation was adopted throughout a number of the editions of GUTHRIE, as well as by ſome of his imitators. All of a ſudden, however, the ſurface of the globe ſhrunk up from 199 to 148 millions of miles! The habitable world, the continents, the ſeas, and unknown parts, contracted themſelves in like manner; but the great empires of Perſia, Rome, Ruſſia, China, and the Mogul, kept their dimenſions to a ſingle mile—nay, even increaſed in magnitude!* The iſlands were equally fortunate in this reſpect, though they ſuffered, perhaps, a greater diſgrace, in being excluded from the habitable world, the whole extent of which was filled up with continents! For the truth of theſe remarks, we appeal to the tables of the earth's dimenſions, in CAREY's, the London and Scots editions of GUTHRIE, and to HERON's and MORSE's Geographies, publiſhed in 1796.

Having mentioned theſe two *admirable* calculations only in round numbers, where a few hundreds or thouſands of miles go for nothing, it is now neceſſary to take ſome notice of the *improved* calculation, in which, undoubtedly, we muſt be more exact. All of them ſuppoſe the diameter of the earth to be 7970 *Engliſh* miles; according to which, (allowing 69½ miles to a degree) the exact computation of its ſquare ſurface is 199,552,869 miles. In the introduction to SCOTT's Gazetteer, we are told, that it contains but 199,257,259 miles. In CRUTWELL's Gazetteer we have the ſame computation: but the pitiful extent of a few hundred thouſand miles is not worth minding in modern geography! In the reformed computation by Mr. GUTHRIE, though the diameter of the earth continues to be meaſured by *Engliſh* miles, it ſeems its ſurface muſt be meaſured by *Geographical* ones. The calculation made exactly according to this meaſure, is, that it contains 148,730,000 ſuch

* This extraordinary exception of the great empires, while the reſt of the world ſhrunk in its dimenſions, puts us in mind of what MILTON ſays of the fallen angels:

"Behold a wonder! They but now who ſeem'd
"In bigneſs to ſurpaſs earth's giant ſons,
"Now, leſs than ſmalleſt dwarfs, in narrow room
"Throng numberleſs. But, far within,
"And *in their own dimenſions*, like themſelves,
"The great Seraphic lords and Cherubim
"In cloſe receſs and ſecret conclave ſat."

PARADISE LOST, Book I.

miles. Our geographers make it 148,510,627 miles; thus coming within *two hundred and nineteen thousand* miles of the truth;—a moſt aſtoniſhing and unheard-of accuracy, for the compilers of GUTHRIE's Grammar! One remark more we beg leave to add; which is, that though all of our calculators ſuppoſe the diameter of the earth to be 7970 miles, and conſequently muſt multiply by an exact number of *tens*, yet the geographies make their product end with 7; the gazetteers, with 9. According to this extraordinary arithmetic, if we multiply *ten* by *two*, the product ought to be *ſeventeen* or *nineteen!**

By ſuch a ſtrange mode of procedure, every reader muſt be greatly embarraſſed. The matter ſeems to be, that they have confounded Engliſh miles of 69½ to a degree, with the geographical miles of 60 to the ſame meaſure; and not calculating properly by either, they have involved their works in the moſt ridiculous obſcurity. At the ſame time, not adverting that it was neceſſary to carry the correction, ſuch as it was, through the whole table, they have allowed the empires to ſtand as they were, and thus made them quite out of proportion to the dimenſions aſſigned to the earth.

In other matters, Mr. GUTHRIE has been followed in as ſervile a manner. A typographical error had crept into one of the early editions of his book; viz. that the planet Saturn performs his revolution in *twenty-two* years, inſtead of *twenty-nine*. This paſſed through ſeveral editions; but was at laſt, after many years, corrected. Yet, in HERON's Geography, of 1796, and the Scots edition of GUTHRIE, in 1799, we find the ſame error retained; a circumſtance which ſhews, that the editors had not even been at the pains to procure the beſt editions of the book from which they meant to tranſcribe, and which falſifies their vaunted accuracy, learning, and improvements.

Even in the little which is ſaid, or which is neceſſary to be ſaid, in ſuch books, concerning aſtronomy, we meet with imperfect and puerile illuſtrations. Mr. HERON and the Montroſe editors have, indeed, diſtinguiſhed themſelves above their brethren, by an elegant plate, containing figures apparently rel-

* Along with theſe inferior writers, we are ſorry to rank Dr. HUTTON, *Profeſſor of Mathematics* in the Military Academy at Woolwich in England. In his Mathematical Dictionary, article *Earth*, he ſays, that its circumference is 25,000 miles, and its diameter 7957¾. From this he calculates the ſurface at 198,044,206 ſquare miles: but how he makes out this product, from multiplying 7957·75 by 25,000, is beſt known to himſelf. One would be tempted to think he had ſtudied under Mr. GUTHRIE! The doctor, however, is modeſt. He ſays, his calculation may be taken as *near* the truth. It may be *near*, but it certainly is *not* the truth; for if we multiply 7957·75 by 25,000, the product undoubtedly is, not 198,944,206, but 198,943,750.

ative to aſtronomy, but without any explanation, excepting what is to be met with on the plate itſelf. In one part of this *ample apparatus*, (as Mr. HERON calls his tables and maps) we find the *new moon* ſhining with a full round face, and the *full moon* involved in darkneſs; we have an orb of fixed ſtars, and ſtars below the fixed ſtars; we have the earth in the centre, and the ſun at one ſide, with two circles around him, one of which paſſes through the centre of the earth, and may, perhaps, be deſigned to repreſent its orbit. But we muſt not indulge in conjectures, as the whole is probably emblematical, and relative to *aſtrology!*

In glancing over the other parts of theſe performances, we find the reſt of the tables, which give the dimenſions of particular diviſions of the earth, liable to the ſame cenſure. In general, they are totally inconſiſtent with the maps to which they refer. Thus, in the Scots edition of GUTHRIE, the table of dimenſions prefixed to Europe, aſſigns to Scotland a length of *three hundred* miles, and a breadth of *three hundred and fifty*; but the annexed map limits its breadth to little more than *two hundred*. In the correſponding table by HERON, we have the ſame dimenſions; and yet, under the title *Scotland*, both agree in the declaration, that its breadth is no more than *one hundred and ninety*. Mr. CAREY, in his article *Scotland*, aſſents to this laſt number; yet, in his European table, he eſtimates the length at 300, and the breadth only at 150 miles. In the ſame works, we find the dimenſions of Great-Britain, in the general table, fixed at 72,926 ſquare miles; but under *England*, it is augmented to 79,712. This error pervades HERON, and the Montroſe edition, but is leſs apparent in Mr. CAREY's. He gives the ſquare meaſure of Scotland and England ſeparately. It will ſcarcely be neceſſary to notice more errors of this kind. If ſuch miſtatements are made reſpecting countries ſo well known, what are we to expect in others? One error, however, concerning the dimenſions of Hungary, is ſo extraordinary, that we cannot forbear to mention it. In HERON, in the London edition of 1798, and in the Montroſe edition of 1799, it is ſtated, under the article *Hungary*, that the country contains 36,060 ſquare miles; and in the very next line, that it has 87,575 ſquare miles, with 57 inhabitants to each!

Equally contradictory are the accounts reſpecting the population of different countries. In one part of GUTHRIE, the population of Iceland is ſtated at 60,000; and in another part, it is ſaid that, when numbered, the inhabitants amounted to 46,201. This contradiction pervades all the works we have mentioned, in common with Mr. CAREY and Dr. MORSE. Nay, Mr. Ca-

KEY has introduced a contradiction (not, indeed, reſpecting *Iceland*, but *Lapland*) which the others have not. In page 112 of his work, he ſtates the inhabitants of this country at 60,000; and in page 113, at 100,000. But, beyond all others, the London edition of GUTHRIE, in 1798, when treating of the population of Hungary, ſeems to excel in abſurdity. Having firſt complained of the thinneſs of the population in that country, and then furniſhed it with between three and four millions of people, he informs us, that a committee, appointed for the purpoſe, had determined that it contained 1777 perſons to a ſquare mile.* A population ſo extraordinary exceeds the moſt exaggerated calculations of Chineſe numbers, and reduces its boaſted millions to the duſt of the balance. As TOWNSON was quoted, we looked into his book, and found that the mile alluded to was a German mile, containing 16 Engliſh ones: ſo that the country is ſtill far from being thinly peopled, as it contains upwards of 100 inhabitants to a ſquare mile.

Even in the merely geographical part, we meet with ſuch ſhameful neglect and contradiction, as muſt induce a diffidence in other parts, where no contradiction is obſervable. It is well known, that Eaſt-Greenland was univerſally ſuppoſed to be a part of the continent, either of Europe or America, until the year 1773, when it was diſcovered to be an iſland. Yet the former erroneous opinion has kept its place in all the editions of GUTHRIE, in CAREY, HERON, and the three editions of Dr. MORSE; and at the ſame time, in all theſe publications, the voyage of Capt. PHIPPS is mentioned, and the place correctly laid down as an iſland in the annexed maps. To this error, Dr. MORSE has added another ſtill greater, if poſſible, viz. that the Moravians have miſſionaries in three places in *Eaſt*-Greenland, and that "their congregations are increaſing"—in a country inhabited only by bears and other wild beaſts! We are, indeed, told, that within the laſt *thirty* years, the Ruſſians have formed ſome ſettlements there for hunting: but this is a mere hackneyed ſentence, taken from ſome of the former editions of GUTHRIE, and copied, from generation to generation, by his printers and imitators, without the alteration of a word. It would puzzle OEDIPUS himſelf, to tell when theſe *thirty years* began. In treating of Iceland, we meet with matter no leſs curious and ſurpriſing. A moſt violent eruption of volcanic fire took place in this iſland, in the year 1783, of which no notice is to be found in CAREY, HERON, MORSE, or any edition of GUTHRIE, excepting that of the Montroſe, which mentions its continuance

* If we may believe ſome accounts, the population of India is much greater than even this; but with regard to Europe, it is incredible.

for ſeveral days. In fact, it laſted two months. All, however, except the Montroſe editors, agree in copying a newſpaper paragraph, true, no doubt, at the time of publication; viz. that, "In April, 1783, the inhabitants of Iceland obſerved ſome-"thing riſing and flaming in the ſea, to the ſouth of *Grinbourg* "and the rocks *des Oiſeaux*, or *Olſeaux*," (it matters not which; for no one knows where Grinbourg or theſe rocks are ſituated) "which afterwards was found to be a new iſland. The fact "is authentic; but its dimenſions and ſituation are not well "aſcertained. The information brought by the laſt ſhip from "thence, was, that the iſland was ſtill increaſing, and that great "quantities of fire iſſued from two of its eminences." Thus has this terrible iſland continued to increaſe and vomit fire, from April, 1783, to July, 1801, when the laſt edition of Dr. MORSE's Geography was publiſhed. Tremendous indeed it muſt be, if GUTHRIE's Grammar goes on to an hundred editions! Unleſs ſome method be found to arreſt its progreſs, it may conſume the habitable world, and evaporate the ocean! Fortunately, however, our alarms on this ſubject may ſubſide. The iſland ſunk ſoon after its firſt appearance; and the ſame newſpaper which announced its riſe, announced alſo its fall. This was unnoticed by GUTHRIE, and for that reaſon was probably diſregarded by other geographers. From this, as well as many other inſtances, it muſt unequivocally appear to every one, that ſyſtems of geography have been formed, not by collecting authentic information, but by mere tranſcripts from undigeſted and irregular works, thrown together without judgment or compariſon, and feebly aſſiſted by heterogeneous ſcraps from the narrations of modern travellers.

It was natural to expect, that our compilers would have availed themſelves of the diſcoveries made by the lateſt voyagers and travellers: but we find ourſelves totally diſappointed. Mr. GUTHRIE, indeed, has availed himſelf of the travels of Mr. TOWNSON through Hungary; but in a manner ridiculous and unintelligible, without conſulting TOWNSON himſelf. It might have been expected, that the Montroſe editors would have profited by the travels of their countryman, Mr. PARK; but they have reverſed the very important intelligence given by him, concerning the courſe of the River Niger,* and in no reſpect

* Mr. PARK has diſcovered the courſe of the Niger to be from weſt to eaſt; but theſe editors follow Mr. LUCAS, who ſuppoſed that it was from eaſt to weſt. But, as if contradiction were inſeparable from ſuch publications, we have a map of Africa, in which the river runs from weſt to eaſt; and the courſe is the ſame in the general map of the world: but the name of Mr. PARK, or his travels, is not once mentioned in the whole work. Dr. MORSE errs in a contrary way; for he has deſcribed the courſe accurately in print, but given an erroneous map.

ſeem to pay attention to his admirable production. In their account of China, the ſame Montroſe editors, though they were acquainted with Lord MACARTNEY, ſeem to have wholly neglected the valuable information given by Sir GEORGE STAUNTON. They quote M. GROSIER as the lateſt writer on China; and yet, on ſome unknown authority, reduce the population of that country, ſtated by him at 270 millions, to 58 millions. This laſt is ſurely a very thin population for a country of ſuch vaſt extent; and all travellers agree in a remarkable notice of the numbers of the Chineſe. Sir GEORGE STAUNTON, from the beſt authority, fixes them at 333 millions. Dr. MORSE appears to be acquainted with the writings of Sir GEORGE, but no where mentions this remarkable particular. He copies from M. AMIOT, who, in a diſſertation publiſhed in 1777, eſtimates the population at 200 millions. M. LE COMPTE calculates the males as amounting to 58 or 59 millions. Here are differences! in one caſe, of 133, and in another, of 275 *millions* of people! So unſupported are the vaunted excellencies of theſe geographical compendiums! ſo confuſed in ſtatement, and indefinite in inſtruction!

We forbear to criticiſe farther, and ſhould not have proceeded this length, but to vindicate our aſſertions, and prove our apology for a new ſyſtem. Indeed, with reſpect to America, we may with truth declare, that no European work has appeared, which has not been marked with great and palpable error. We truſt it will not be thought invidious to declare, that the American works on the ſame ſubject want much labour, and much inveſtigation, to render them fit for conveying to the reader an adequate idea of this country. The works of BELKNAP, HUTCHINSON, MINOT, WILLIAMS, SMITH, PROUD, HEWITT, IMLAY, NELSON, HUTCHINS, EDWARDS, RAMSAY, and JEFFERSON, are rich mines, whence we may draw inſtruction ſufficient to produce a regular figure of this riſing nation, though yet in its infancy.

The labour of compiling a geographical work, of the extent we propoſe, will undoubtedly be great. Our reſources, however, are numerous and authentic; and we have the encouragement and countenance of many men, eminent for literature and learning. As no expenſe will be ſpared, we truſt that we ſhall ſtrictly fulfil the expectations of the public in the extent of our deſign. The method which we preſcribe to ourſelves, cannot be better expreſſed, than in the words of Dr. BUSCHING.

"I was under an indiſpenſable neceſſity," ſays he, "of ſet-
"ting about the work, as if no ſyſtem of geography had been
"extant before. I am very ſenſible, that there are many trea-

" tiſes of that nature publiſhed. However, I could not impli-
" citly depend upon, nor ſafely *copy after* them; but was obliged
" carefully to examine every particular, and to have recourſe
" to the firſt and beſt ſources. My predeceſſors in this ſcience,
" indeed, generally *copy from each other*; and ſuch as have not
" copied from other ſyſtems of geography, have uſed ſuch helps
" as are univerſally known, and open to every one's peruſal, if
" we except a very few particulars: and it is evident, they ei-
" ther had not or could not have recourſe to the beſt ſources,
" or (which has generally been the caſe) did not uſe them with
" a proper degree of care and impartiality. Hence a perſon
" who has the leaſt ſkill in geography, or knowledge of the
" terraqueous globe, has reaſon to complain, that the ſyſtems
" of geography hitherto publiſhed are of very little ſervice.
" Theſe were my motives for not *blindly following* my predeceſ-
" ſors, who have written on this ſubject. On the contrary, I
" had recourſe to the ſame originals from which they derived
" their materials, and likewiſe to ſources which they could not
" have acceſs to, or, if they had, *which they made no uſe of*.....
" I can truly aver, that I have neither retailed, new modelled,
" nor made the labours of my predeceſſors on this ſubject, the
" ground-work of mine; but proceeded as if no ſuch books
" had been extant, and I myſelf had been the firſt who wrote
" upon the ſubject..... I am well convinced, that thoſe who
" ſhall write on this ſubject after me, will, by experience, find
" what I have here advanced to be true; and it is my earneſt
" requeſt, that they would, in the manner I have done, exam-
" ine every particular as far as it is poſſible, without truſting
" to others."

" The exactneſs and authenticity of the accounts require a
" proper arrangement and diſpoſition, which muſt not be arbi-
" trary, whimſical, or capricious, but adapted to the conſtitu-
" tion of the ſeveral countries, and the ſituation of their ſeveral
" parts or diviſions, ſo as to facilitate the knowledge of them
" to the reader. But the principal head of authenticity con-
" ſiſts in the geographer's not framing deſignedly any fictitious
" accounts, nor credulouſly taking up any fables on truſt; but
" as well in the choice of the ſources from whence he draws
" his accounts, as in the uſe of them, proceeding with caution
" and deliberation; ſo that his ſyſtem of geography may be as
" juſt and authentic as poſſible. His ſources *muſt not* be other
" general ſyſtems of geography, but accurate deſcriptions of
" ſingle countries and provinces, and his own aſſiduous inqui-
" ries. He ought to give the preference to ſuch deſcriptions
" as have been executed on the ſpot, in thoſe ſeveral countries,

"by perſons of abilities and impartiality, with a proper degree "of care; and indeed he ſhould not uſe any other accounts "but theſe, whether they be printed, or communicated to him "in manuſcript: and among theſe, the later accounts are more "ſerviceable than the old; though theſe alſo ſhould, at the "ſame time, be conſulted and made uſe of. In examining "theſe helps, many tedious and irkſome critical inquiries muſt "be undertaken with unwearied patience, and unremitting care "and aſſiduity; either for diſcovering the truth amidſt the "darkneſs, obſcurity and doubt, in which it may happen to be "involved, or, where the helps prove contradictory, to come as "near it as poſſible."

In conformity with theſe rules, as far as it is in our power, we mean to proceed, and now offer to the Public the following

## *PLAN OF THE WORK.*

I. SOME knowledge of ASTRONOMY is indiſpenſably neceſſary, in order to underſtand Geography. But no perſon can underſtand Aſtronomy, even in the ſlighteſt degree, without ſome knowledge in GEOMETRY and OPTICS. A few of the principles of theſe ſciences, therefore, begin the work, that the reader may meet with nothing in the aſtronomical part, with which he can be embarraſſed. The truth of the propoſitions is illuſtrated, not by mathematical demonſtration, which, to thoſe unaccuſtomed to it, will always prove tedious and unentertaining; but by figures contrived for the purpoſe, the mere inſpection of which is ſufficient to convince the perſon who looks at them with attention. Optics are treated of only as far as is neceſſary to explain the laws of refraction, and the nature of teleſcopes. PERSPECTIVE is alſo treated of as far as is requiſite for underſtanding the projection of the ſphere, and the conſtruction of maps.

II. The aſtronomical part will be conciſe and comprehenſive; illuſtrated, as the former, by particular figures, alſo contrived to render mathematical demonſtration unneceſſary. In theſe figures, the proportional diſtances and magnitudes of the heavenly bodies will, on all occaſions, be repreſented, where it is poſſible: for a figure, as like Nature as we can make it, is certainly much more proper to give an idea of Nature itſelf, than one drawn quite out of proportion, which is almoſt always the caſe with aſtronomical figures. In conformity with

this part of our plan, ſome of our Aſtronomical Plates will be much larger than thoſe uſually given. In compiling this, the beſt authors on Aſtronomy have been conſulted and carefully compared with each other; ſo that there can be no doubt of the authenticity of every particular.

III. The USE OF THE GLOBES will be explained, with the method of ſolving, by their means, many aſtronomical and geographical problems.

IV. A GENERAL HISTORY OF MANKIND, exhibiting, in a brief and comprehenſive manner, a View of the State of the World, from the earlieſt accounts to the preſent time; by which the reader will be enabled more fully to underſtand the particular hiſtories which follow. This will likewiſe include the State of Commerce and the Arts, particularly the progreſs of geographical knowledge and diſcovery.

V. AN HISTORY OF RELIGION; in which pains will be taken to illuſtrate and explain the MYTHOLOGY of the Ancients; a ſubject very neceſſary for underſtanding the claſſical writers.

VI. A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE EARTH, including an Account of the Climates, Winds and Tides, Animal, Vegetable and Mineral Productions, in various parts of the Northern and Southern Hemiſpheres; by which much particular deſcription will be ſaved, and diſguſting repetitions avoided.

VII. TABLES, diſpoſed in alphabetical order, of the moſt remarkable SEAPORTS throughout the World, and of the Commodities exported from them, or imported into them; alſo of the Depth of Water in the Harbours, Roads, &c.; the Rocks and Shoals on the Coaſts throughout the World, with the principal Capes or Headlands; which, it is hoped, will render the work intereſting to MARINERS and COMMERCIAL PEOPLE.

VIII. A TABLE will alſo be given of the principal INLAND TOWNS mentioned in the body of the work; by which it will be eaſy to find the deſcription of any place, of which a perſon remembers the name, though he cannot recollect the country to which it belongs.

IX. In the DESCRIPTIONS OF PARTICULAR COUNTRIES, care will be taken to preſerve CONSISTENCY, and to obſerve the rules we have already quoted from Dr. BUSCHING; and to theſe we ſhall now add another, viz. "Every where to exclude all unintereſting and trifling particulars, "which might ſwell books of this kind to an uncommon and

"unwieldy ſize; leſt more uſeful and important accounts be "precluded by trivial ſubjects, mere empty words, indecent "abuſe, irony, ſarcaſm, and religious diſputes." By attending ſtrictly to this rule, much room will be gained, and a book of ſmall ſize may contain more inſtruction than one of double its bulk. For this reaſon we agree with Dr. BUSCHING, in omitting entirely the General CHARACTERS OF NATIONS. "I wholly avoid," ſays he, "giving the Characters of Nations; "it being not only a very difficult taſk in itſelf, but ſuch gen- "eral characters are alſo, at beſt, uncertain, and generally ill- "grounded and partial. . . . . Men differ greatly in their make, "ſize, method of living, and manners: but, as to the difference "in their intellectual faculties, we are not to look for that in "their nature or climate, but in the greater or leſs opportunities "they have of improving and exerciſing their mental powers. . . . "Almoſt every nation have their own peculiar manners and "cuſtoms: and as the notions of what is decent and becoming "differ as much as the people who obſerve them do, it is un- "reaſonable and abſurd for one nation to ridicule another, on "account of their difference in this particular. Many nations "and individuals, who pretend to rank themſelves among the "civilized part of their ſpecies, have ſo many odd and abſurd "cuſtoms, as might juſtly expoſe them to the ridicule of thoſe "who are called barbarians and uncivilized. It may be ob- "ſerved, in general, that among all people and nations of the "earth, there are ſome of a reaſonable, and others of an unrea- "ſonable diſpoſition or turn of mind; as there are alſo, in ev- "ery country, graceful and awkward, candid and diſingenuous, "virtuous and vicious, mild and auſtere, polite and ill-bred, no- "ble and ignoble perſons."

But though we thus decline a department, into which our brethren have entered with very little ceremony, the reader will be furniſhed with the means of forming theſe characters to himſelf. The character of an individual is formed by his *actions*; of a nation, by its *hiſtory*. In our HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT, therefore, every care will be taken to exhibit a view of the tranſactions of each nation, with regard to other nations of the earth, not by mutilated ſcraps taken from different authors, but in a connected ſeries, whether long or ſhort. For the ſame reaſon, our account of LEARNING and LEARNED MEN will contain, not a catalogue of *names*, which perhaps the reader never heard of; but to the name will be added ſome account of what kind of learning they diſtinguiſhed themſelves in, as well as the time when they lived. An account of the celebrated GENERALS and WARRIORS pro-

duced by each nation, will alſo be given: and laſtly, a Table will be given at the cloſe of each hiſtory, exhibiting, at one view, the number of years during which the nation was at war; the time that the war continued; the intervals of peace; the number of people deſtroyed during the conteſt, with the advantages procured to either party, by the war they had made.

We cannot expatiate on all the other departments of the propoſed work. In every inſtance, care ſhall be taken to avoid perplexity and partiality, and to exhibit nothing to the public, but what may contribute, in one way or other, to the inſtruction and entertainment of the reader. After all, we are extremely ſenſible of the difficulty of the taſk; and, having already quoted ſo much from Dr. BUSCHING, we ſhall conclude with apologizing, in his words, to the reader, for the imperfections he may meet with in our work: "To write a Syſtem of GEOGRAPHY, or, in other "words, to give a Deſcription of the Earth, is a very difficult, "laborious and important taſk, and requires the united efforts "of whole ſocieties. What an arduous undertaking then muſt "it be, for a SINGLE PERSON?"

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